VOICE OF TAMILNADU

SAVE DEMOCRACY

Pledge taken at the mammoth public meeting at Marina, Madras On 6th July 1975

பேராசிரியர். தி.வ. மெய்கண்டார் அவர்களின்
அன்பளிப்பு

On behalf of the D.M.K,, a mammoth public meeting was held at the 'Seerani Arangam' on the beach in Madras on Sunday, 6th July, 1975, to explain the Resolution adopted earlier by the Executive Committee of the D.M.K. in the context of promulgation of the Internal Emergency by the Government of India.

More than 5 lakhs of people participated in the meeting.

This booklet contains the speech delivered by the President of the D.M.K. Dr. M. KARUNANIDHI, on the occasion.

Lakhs and lakhs of citizens have gathered here and this mammoth rally has heen organised not for the purpose of criticising the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi but with the objective of saving Indian democracy.

If only our adversaries and others, including those at the Centre, would understand this objective, I am confident that they would be able to realise in a very clear manner the extent to which the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam is devoted and dedicated to the creed of democracy.

The D. M. K. has no personal animosity or hostility whatsoever against Mrs. Indira Gandhi. We in India, particularly in Tamil Nadu, and, still more particularly in the D. M. K., are fully aware that Mrs. Indira Gandhi is the grand-daughter of that doyen among freedom-fighters, Pandit Motilal Nehru, that she is the noble daughter of that defender of Indian democracy, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and that she had become known to the Indian people even when she was an infant crawling on the lap of Mahatma Gandhi. Even now, we accord due regard to her on account of this illustrious ancestry of hers.

The respect, esteem and welcome extended to her in foreign countries have on numerous occasions come as joyous news to the D. M. K, When the Universities in some of those countries invited her and conferred honorary Doctorates on her we have expressed our happiness and conveyed our felicitations.

But what is the situation obtaining today? Is there any conflict in viewpoint between the progressive plans enunciated by Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the D.M. K. or the Government led by the D.M.K.? Have we stated at any time that we would stand in the way of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's progressive plans or programme?

History would have been different

In the year 1969, a turning point of far-reaching dimensions was to occur on the political scene in India—one could even say that it did actually occur. If, at that time, the D.M.K. had not extended support to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the shape of things would have been vastly different.

When the question arose at that time, who is to be the President of India—Mr. V. V. Giri with his tradition of service to the cause of industrial workers or Mr. N. Sanjeeva Reddi, the candidate of the Old Congress, the D.M.K. extended its principled support to Mr. Giri by way of giving expression to its sincere appreciation of the progressive economic measures initiated by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, such as the Abolition of Privy Purse and the Nationalisation of Banks. It was because of this support given by the D.M.K. that Mr. Giri was elected President and Mrs. Indira Gandhi could continue to be in power.

Although Mrs. Indira Gandhi herself has not openly expressed her thanks for this, even on a single occasion, Mr. V. V. Giri said at Salem when he had come there to unveil a statue of Dr. Anna, "If today I happen to be President of India, it is because of two of the Chief Ministers—the first is Sardar Gurnam Singh in Punjab and the second is Mr. Karunanidhi here in Tamil Nadu."

I am mentioning all this only to point out the fact that the D.M.K. had taken a major political decision in the year 1969 to strengthen the hands of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, impelled by the desire to be of concrete assistance in the implementation of measures of progressive content and to ensure that India did not drift towards disintegration.

If we had opined at that juncture that it would be to our advantage only if India were to disintegrate and break up into bits and pieces, only if the very expression "All India" is expelled from usage, and only if dark clouds besiege the political skies of India; and if, in pursuance of this line of thinking we had decided not to lend the votes of the D.M.K. M.P.s and M.L.A.s, what would have been the situation in India? Those who, in such haste and hurry are pouncing on the D. M. K. in the wake of the present Emergency should deign to ponder this!

Contribution to National Defence

Whenever India was threatened by external aggression, the D.M.K. had come forward to suspend or postpone its policy and even its objective so as to devote itself to the task of helping the Defence-effort and securing victory for the country.

Six crores of rupees we contributed to the National Defence Fund on behalf of Tamil Nadu. Even at that time, some persons here objected to the portraits of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and myself appearing on the posters. "The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu is to collect and hand over the contribution; and the Prime Minister of India is to receive the same. How could their portraits find a place on the posters issued in connection with the programme?"— it was this factor that was made much of. Those who engineered the controversy were least bothered over the fact that the D.M.K. was of constant and unfailing assistance for the Defence of India.

We should not forget that it is the same situation that obtains even today.

In the present context, the issue is not whether Mrs. Indira Gandhi should continue as Prime Minister or not. The issue is whether democracy is to continue in India or not. We are now to find the answer to this.

Democracy deep-rooted in Tamil Nadu

Democratic traditions are being nurtured and protected in India for many years. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, the Tamils had grasped the fundamentals of democracy even a thousand years back and they had also successfully practised the same. At Uthiramerur in the Chingleput District there is a rock - inscription dating back to 919 - 921 A.D, according to which a form of ballot was there during the reign of Parantaka Chola I, to select suitable persons to be placed in charge of the administration of rural areas. This would go to prove that the republican, democratic form of government was in vogue even at that time.

Tamil Nadu had adopted democracy over two thousand years ago. The tenets and traditions of democracy have become an integral part of the blood-stream of the Tamils on account of their heritage. And when danger stalks this precious creed, when disaster threatens to maim democracy which had struck roots in this soil many centuries ago, no wonder the D.M.K. is alarmed, puzzled and wonders in trepidation as to what the future has in store!

Whether looked at from the Party-angle or from the angle of Government, the D.M.K. is a Movement that has protected and nurtured the traditions of democracy.

There are any number of Parties in the country today. Some of the Parties do not even boast of a Constitution or rules of functioning. Telegrams go out to a hundred individuals summoning them to Madras; and when they are foregathered, they are told, "I have selected you to be Members of the General Council of the Party; and you in turn should elect me to be your leader!". Such are the wondrous ways of their democracy!

If the D.M.K. were to subscribe to such notions of democracy, then we of the Kazhagam would be mere flunkeys today, obsequiously toeing the line of Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

Dr. Anna's example

It was Dr. Anna who imparted lessons on the traditions of democracy to the D.M.K. and an illustration could be cited to describe the thoroughness with which he did this work. When Dr. Anna was General Secretary of the D.M.K. it so happened on one occasion that a solitary member of the General Council brought up an ordinary complaint against him. On that occasion, Dr. Anna who was conducting the deliberations of the Council stepped down promptly and invited another member of the Council to take the Chair for the duration of the particular discussion saying, "An allegation has been levelled against me and so it would not be proper for me to function as Chairman. Until such time as the inquiry is completed, it is for some other member to conduct the proceedings and put questions to me so that I may reply to the allegation!

We of the D. M. K. walk in the footsteps of a leader who taught us such lofty methods of democracy. Even in the face of the tiniest of issues, the D. M. K. has exercised care to ensure that the traditions of democracy were not given the go-by.

In the Indian sub-continent—in a country which has been acclaimed as the largest democracy in the world—we are today confronted with the fear as to whether harm would befall democracy.

They say by way of explanation, "Such and such a thing could occur ; so we have acted in this manner." This elucidation is packed with the element of mystery and it presents itself as so many skulls ! Apart from this, we are not aware whether

anything else has been given out to explain the situation !

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Just this afternoon I had occasion to listen to a play broadcast by the All India Radio. In that drama a maiden is sold away in the market-place. She is a comely damsel—a woman of ravishing beauty. A very wealthy lord it is who has purchased her and he transports her to his town. On reaching his mansion he calls his wife in the garden and informs her, " My dear, I have brought a beautiful slave. " The lord's wife is pleased to get a maid-servant and she orders the slave's veil to be removed, whereupon she stands face-to-face with unparalleled beauty. Soon afterwards the lord goes on a short trip to another town in connection with some item of business, leaving the slave in his wife's care, The lady of the house now ruminates, " My lord and master could not have brought this good-looking girl for attending to domestic work alone ; he has deeper designs in his mind and I should devise measures to frustrate those schemes. She sends for the hair - dresser and orders the tresses of the slave-girl to be clipped in a haphazard manner. Not content with this act of depradation, she takes up a branding iron and draws gruesome lines on the face of the slave-girl, reducing the victim to a horrendous figure. And all the while the lady explains, " My husband might make love to this girl ; and hence it is that I am taking all these precautions"!

We are witnessing a similar scene in the Indian subcontinent at the present moment, "Danger could come through some channel ", they say as they proceed to disfigure the democracy-damsel by cutting away her tresses and inflicting criss-cross lines on her face by weilding a branding iron.

What we ask is, " Is this at all necessary? " And this query of ours is characterised as treason. Is it treason indeed ?

When all other States contributed only Rs. one crore or two crores to the National Defence Fund we gave a munificent six crores—was that treason? If that is called treason we are prepared to continue to indulge in it! But by no stretch of imagination could it be dubbed treason.

Looking at the conditions prevailing in the country today, senior leaders who had struggled so much in order to secure freedom for India from foreign yoke—those fierce nationalists of the earlier era who had devoutly hoped that in the evening of their life they would have the pride and satisfaction of seeing their grand-children breathing the air of untrammelled freedom and enjoying all fundamental rights—these noble elders are actually in tears. Could such a scene be allowed to occur at all?

Only last night I was reading a letter addressed to me by a former Minister who is a towering intellectual too. He had said in anguish: "Press-freedom has been taken away in entirety", And as I went through his words of agony, I could hardly control my grief.

Thus, in this hallowed land of India, the leaders of the country—they who had grown up in nationalist traditions—they who had willingly and whole-heartedly surrendered themselves to prison-life through prolonged years, in the cause of the freedom-struggle—they who had carried gruel-pots in jail—they who had been subjected to tortures vile—these seniors are in the grip of distress arising out of the fear as to what would happen to the hard-won freedom. They are spending sleepless nights, shedding tears and even crying out in misery.

This mass rally and meeting has been organised only to pose the question to the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi as to whether she could not come forward to wipe the tears of these stalwarts in national

life. The purpose of this meeting is to convey to the Prime Minister the feelings of the people of the country in this regard.

Any number of problems have been resolved through talks The very grammar of democracy is to seek to solve problems through the medium of discussion.

Repression did not pay

Sheikh Abdullah was thrown into jail in the year 1953. For 22 years he was prevented from participating in active politics and he was shifted from one prison to another in different States. Still the underlying problem could be taken nowhere near a solution.

The constraints were that Sheikh Abdullah should not speak, that no-one should write about him, that he should not remain in his own State and that even the members of his family should not move about freely. After 22 years, a happy solution has been arrived at.

As we look at the picture obtaining today when the very same Sheikh Abdullah who had been placed behind bars for 22 years is the Premier of Kashmir and is in receipt of felicitations from Mrs. Indira Gandhi, what we should ponder is whether this resolution of the tangle has been brought about through democratic means or whether the solution is on the basis of the repression which kept the Sheikh in incarceration for more than two decades !

This introspection would lead to the awareness of the fact of life that any number of issues could be sorted out and solved through the medium of democracy,

Who are those that are in prison today? We are not bothered about the imprisonment of the persons subscribing to and indulging in violence. Also if the Government were to file charge-sheets in the Court of Law against persons who seek to undermine or alienate the loyalty of the Armed Forces or the civilian officials, we would have nothing to say about that.

All that came up by way of provocation was an announcement to the effect that a mass-rally would be organised in front of the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi's residence. If the mere expression of this intention could result in such a situation throughout India, what could be condign punishment for the political personality and his followers who announced in public : "We would invade homes and wipe out all evidence of our acts" (**The assemblage gave word to the category of the punishment that would meet the ends of justice**).

We are of the clan of Dr. Anna who was of the confirmed view that punishment (as the one proposed by you all assembled here) should not be inflicted. We are those who have faith in the ways of democracy. It is because we believe that the verdict of the people as conveyed through the ballot would constitute adequate riposte to such threats and menaces that we keep the peace even when our adversaries announce that they would chop off our heads and indulge in all manner of provocative language.

What the D. M. K. views with concern is that, in the wake of the Judgement of the Allahabad High Court and the conditional Stay Order granted subsequently by the Supreme Court, a situation has been created wherein India's democracy has drawn the anguished attention of the world.

Total ban on news

• News is being blacked out. In the English language this is known as "Censorship". Till now we had heard of the term "Censor" only in connection with films. That too if you submit a picture 15,000 feet in length they might snip off 2000 feet or so and permit the remainder to be released. But such mercies are not prevalent in regard to news-items. Press-Censorship today places a total ban on news.

A certain President of the United States is said to have commented on one occasion that only after going through newspapers such as the **NEW YORK TIMES** early in the morning was he able to learn what was going on in his own country and in the world at large.

Only by scanning the columns of the newspaper are we enabled to understand the happenings in the world. The newspaper is Time's mirror and it holds the reflection of the land.

The newspaper is the echo of the mind of the country's citizens—whichever political Party it may belong to.

Just this morning an Opposition newspaper carried a news-item to the effect that a certain bridge had not been constructed, " The moment I read the news-item, I consulted our Public Works Minister and asked him to do the needful in regard to the bridge referred to." The matter could come to my attention only because any newspaper—even if it is on the side of the Opposition—has the right, as far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, to point out what has to be pointed out. Otherwise very many events in the land would be concealed. This would inevitably pave the way for the spreading of rumours; and when rumours spread out, the consequences could be

more terrible than what might have been the reaction to the news-item censored. The end-result would be that people would refuse to believe even authentic news.

You are all familiar with the humorous story to depict the magnitude of rumour-mongering. 'A' had a bout of indigestion and he vomited just once as a result. 'B' was an eye-witness to this and he conveyed the news casually to 'C' residing on the next street, 'C' told 'D' that 'A' had vomited a black fluid. 'D' went all the way to another street and told 'E' there that 'A''s vomit was black as a crow. Thus the news got transformed into a wild rumour and finally it was being bruited about that poor 'A' had vomited crows and that his health-condition was such as to cause anxiety!

The moral of the tale is that when rumour is let loose, it grows feet and wings and when it starts lying high, the first casualty is honest news!

Censorship and Conscience

The Prime Minister has declared that it would not be possible for her to restore Press-freedom now. She has further posed the question, "For what purpose Press-freedom—is it to oppose me ?"

The Central directives ragarding Press Censorship have been sent to all the States including Tamil Nadu. State Governments may add a clause or two to the rules listed and proceed to implement Censorship, Are you aware of the additions made by the Government of Andhra Pradesh ? What the Central Government has stipulated is that misleading or erroneous comments or reviews should not be published in newspapers and journals regarding the Prime Minister or her speeches. In Andhra Pradesh

they have gone one step ahead and added the clause that comments about the Chief Minister too are taboo !

'While implementing the directives received from the Centre we could have added stipulations of our own if we had been inclined to do so. But then, we are democrats both by tradition and temperament.

Since we have the stamina to confront idea with idea, writing with writing and word with word (*prolonged cheers*), we are of the view that if defamatory matter attracting the provisions of the law of the land were to appear, the laws enacted for the purpose would take care of the matter.

Therefore the D.M.K. does not wish to bring legislative measures that would ban comments on the Chief Minister and thereby break the pens and cut off the tongues

The Working Committee of the D.M.K., however, has not told us that the Government of Tamil Nadu does not have to implement the directives received from the Centre.

And so, we shall implement those directives to the extent our conscience allows us. If and when the stage is reached or situations are generated necessitating the crossing of the border-line of conscience, all I would like to say at present is that "we shall pause to consider".

Gautama Buddha had occasion to advise a youth: "O, young man, if you desire to listen to good music, you should neither tighten the strings of the harp excessively nor loosen them too much".

The tension on the strings of the harp or the veena should be limited to the optimum extent, if one's heart is set on mellifluous music.

Excessive tightening means—Dictatorship.

Over-loosening means—we go back to the monarchial regime of the bygone eras.

What we desire today is the democratic form of Government which is midway between Dictatorship and Monarchy.

If one were to arbitrarily tighten the strings of the veena, instead of sweet music emanating from the instrument, the string itself would snap.

We may forget Democracy only at our peril. The merits of the democratic form of Government have been extolled by leaders of international stature and by intellectuals of outstanding calibre.

C P I 's Conspiracy

It would be pertinent here to refer to the antics of the Right Communists in India. These comrades are subjecting the Central Government to all sorts of pressure-tactics while all the time pretending to be of assistance to the Government of India. Their scheme and strategy is to engineer a crisis for the Central Government in the first instance and when the Government is in confusion as a result, to go and say, "Fear not; we are by your side and you may count on our help and support." This is part of their plot to infiltrate into the Central Government and ultimately to bring about dictatorship in India.

In the opera **Valli Thirumanam** (Valli's Wedding), Muruga would invoke his elder brother Vinayaka and request him to come in the form of an elephant and scare Valli who would thereupon be constrained to seek refuge in the arms of Muruga who would be present in the guise of an old man. Of course the drama was a planned conspiracy.

Substitute the Central Government for Valli in the table and you would understand the sinister role of the C. P. I. (Believers should pardon me for likening the C. P. I. etc. to the gods-the analogy is only for illustrating a point).

After frightening those at the Centre by rigging up the trappings of danger and after trapping all the important Central leaders in their net by assuring them that protection is available only there, the C. P. I.-men are taking India along dubious tracks and over tricky terrain. The duty is now cast upon the people of India to ponder all this and act in a clear-headed manner.

In the Resolution adopted by the Executive Committee of the D. M. K. we have stated that Mrs. indira Gandhi has performed the inaugural function for dictatorship. We would like to believe that the inaugural function would remain an inaugural function and not proceed further.

Just as in the case of the numerous functions for the laying of foundation - stones that took place during the regime of Mr. M Bhaktavatsalam, where the intended structures never rose up subsequently, we hope that in the present instance too, the building of dictatorship would not come into being on the foundation-stone laid by the Prime Minister.

May it be noted that in our Resolution we have only referred to the "inaugural function". We have not stated anywhere that " Dictatorship has come ". or that " Dictatorship has been established " or that "India has come under Dictatorship " or that "Dictatorship runs amuck in India."

If only what we have called the Inaugural function remains as such, no-one would be more happy than we of the D. M. K.

20-Point Programme

Mrs. Indira Gandhi has stated that the present arrangement is only for the purpose of introducing the 20-point economic programme and her Partymen here have commenced to echo her voice faithfully.

We welcome the 20-point programme ; of these, 15 points are being implemented by Tamil Nadu already. Even then, the programme would be of use to other States and so I said that we welcomed it.

But in the meeting of the Indira Congress Working Committee held today, Mr. C. Subramaniam, Mr. M. Bhaktavatsalam and the A. I. C. C. Secretary, Mrs. Maragatham Chandrasekhar have passed a Resolution condemning us. Their grievance is that our statement that Tamil Nadu had already embarked on fifteen of the 20 points of the programme is in the nature of making fun of the Congress,

A woman was advised "If only you circumambulate the Vinayaka idol ensconced under the banyan tree. you would conceive." And the good lady retorted, " I am already in the sixth month of pregnancy".

Would it be proper on the part of the discomfited adviser to get angry thereupon and tell the woman, "How dare you make fun of me!" (*Laughter*) She had made a statement of fact and there was no need for her to go round any idol.

We of Tamil Nadu have already implemented 15 items of the programme and we have been seeking funds from the Centre to go ahead with the other five points.

If we are to build one lakh houses for Harijans, our financial requirement is of the order of Rs 40 crores. Our target is 30,000 houses before October

1975; for this purpose we have allotted Rs. 12 crores, out of which, a sum of Rs. 6 crores has been spent till date.

We have planned to construct 5000 houses for the fisherfolk during the current year at a total cost of Rs. 2 crores.

Could we not ask whether schemes of this nature find a place among the 20 points? (*Cheers*).

Could we not ask further, "You are still harping on the old theme of the Nationalisation of 14 Banks. Where is the list of Industries nationalised subsequent to that date?"

Are Harijans confined only to Tamil Nadu? Is it not a fact that crores of Harijans are living throughout India? In which State, other than Tamil Nadu, is there a scheme to build houses for them — each house a solid structure costing Rs. 4000/- (*Cheers*).

The Slum Clearance Scheme under which towering constructions are coming up for the accommodation of slum-dwellers—Is there its like in any other State in India ?

If we mention all this, the Indira Congressmen adopt a Resolution saying that we are committing treason. Do you know what they say? They say that the D. M. K. Government is to be censured for taking a diametrically opposite stand to the progressive measures enunciated by Mrs. Indira Gandhi !

The Resolution of the Indira Congress says that the 20-point programme of the Prime Minister has

sprung out of the anxiety that the total needs of the country have not yet been met; and that it is politically motivated criticism on the part of the D. M. K. to seek to cheapen and colloquialise the programme by putting forward the claim that the Tamil Nadu Government has already implemented the same.

It would be easy for you to guess who the author of this word-play could be. At a time when we of the D. M. K. were in electoral alliance with the Indira Congress and were extending support to her progressive measures, this individual was opposing Mrs. Gandhi tooth and nail. Conditions in the country have come to such a pass that a person of these antecedents is drafting the Resolution referred to and declaring that the D. M. K. is opposed to progressive schemes !

Why abandon democratic means ?

Would not democratic means suffice for the purpose of implementing progressive measures? Are methods other than democratic called for at all ?

Which of the leaders now in prison is opposed to these Schemes ?

That the welfare-measures implemented in Tamil Nadu should be extended to other States also—this is a desire which we all share with Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

What we should consider is whether all those are to be implemented only in an abnormal and agitated atmosphere ?

For how many days more is the present situation to continue? One week, one month, one year or still longer?

Where would we be placed in the scheme of things?—We do not know. But we are neithe perplexed nor do we have any regrets on this score

As if by way of rehearsal, all our Ministers had parked their cars on the roadside itself and walked the distance. This is nothing new to us.

The Pledge

What indeed is going to happen in India? **We still believe that Mrs. Indira Gandhi would preserve democracy—that she would not go to the frontier-line of dictatorship**. And in that faith I tell you now that if only Rajaji had been alive today, he would have called upon the people to pray that Democracy be saved; Periyar E. V. R. would have given a clarion-call for Revolution on this issue; and Quaide Millat would have said in unambiguous terms that the Emergency is not justified.

I proceed to relay to you now what Dr. Anna would have said had he been with us at the present juncture.

The Tamils should take a pledge today on the seashore here. Please stand up (**The vast concourse rises to its feet as one man**) Please repeat what I read out now.

"We solemnly affirm that we would not hesitate in any manner to safeguard India's democracy, whatever be the odds against us and whatever be the crisis that confronts us.

" This vast assemblage of the people of Tamil Nadu requests the Prime Minister of India to fulfil its demands that the national leaders now in detention be set at liberty and the legitimate rights of the Press restored. " Long live Democracy ".

Ideals Never Die

In case the D.M.K. Government in Tamil Nadu is dissolved tomorrow, you should consider that I have taken leave of you all today itself. But none of you should conclude that the Karunanidhi who goes to prison would never come out again. He might come out as a corpse or a near-corpse. But the ideals he cherished are not such as could be buried in the prison-yard.

" Idealists might be imprisoned and put to untold hardship but the moment they emerge from jail, they would resume their journey towards the goal. Likewise the D. M. K. would continue its march in all eagerness."

Dr. M. Karunanidhi

at a public meeting in PARAMATHI
(Salem District) on 14th July '75

'Pan '-red or Bleeding - red ?

What is to be done to get the aromatic red colour to one's mouth ? One has to chew betel-leaves, areca-nut and 'chunam' in proper combination. Some may add tobacco also as a stimulant, even though it is not an essential element for the 'pan.' We may dispense with Parties such as the Naxalites, R.S.S. and Ananda Marg just as we may reject tobacco.

The 'pan' of democracy would redden in the mouth, only if the various ingredients which could be likened to the different political Parties are present and active.

The mouth could also be reddened by punching the face when a few teeth would be broken and bleeding injuries inflicted on the tongue. This is what is called Dictatorship.

I ask : "Do you want the mouth to become pan-red or would you prefer it to be bleeding-red ?" This is what the politicians in India should ponder.

Dr. M. Karunanidhi

at a public meeting in THIRUVADANAI
on 12th July 75'

Democracy Derailed—Why?

" One thing has been made clear by the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi who has said that " Democracy has been derailed ".

If today the train of Indian democracy has been derailed, who is to be blamed for the accident — the driver of the locomotive or the saboteur? Or could it be that none of the railway officials cared to notice the damage to the track arising out of natural causes and issued appropriate forewarning in time?

The responsibility of answering these questions and securing pass-marks in the test is left to you. Do write down the correct answer and obtain your marks from the examiner known as 'Conscience'. I myself would not like to provide the answers.

The anxiety weighing in the minds of the people of Tamil Nadu and India is this-Who is responsible for the present derailment?

The question also arises: Should the derailed train remain derailed? Should not the track be repaired, so that the train of democracy may be on the move again?

If, as the Prime Minister has stated, the train of democracy has been derailed, then the duty is cast upon all of us to put it back on the rails so that we may resume our interrupted journey".

Dr. M. Karunanidhi

at a public meeting in Madras
on 16th July '75.